REMARKS

Claims 1-41 are pending in this application. By the Office Action, claims 1-9, 12-13, and 19-41 are withdrawn from consideration; claims 10-11 and 17-18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102; and claims 14-16 and 18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103. In view of the following remarks, reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested.

I. Election of Species Requirement

Claims 1-9, 12-13, and 19-41 are withdrawn from consideration as subject to an Election of Species Requirement.

Applicants again traverse the Election of Species Requirement on the ground that the generic claims are not so broad as to place an undue burden on the Patent Office to search and examine the full scope of the claims. Rather, Applicants respectfully assert that search and examination of the entire application could be conducted without undue burden on the Examiner, thus avoiding delay and expense to Applicants. Applicants further understand, however, that upon search, examination and allowance of the elected species, search and examination will continue as to the non-elected species within the scope of the generic claims.

II. Rejection Under §102

Claims 10-11 and 17-18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over Moshrefzadeh. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Independent claim 10 is directed to a diffusion sheet that diffuses light incident thereon from a light incident side and causes the light to outgo from a light outgoing side, characterized by comprising: a plurality of approximately trapezoidal columnar unit lens portions disposed such that long-axis directions thereof are in parallel with each other, wherein all surfaces of the unit lens portions, which correspond to long bottom segments of approximately trapezoidal sections of the unit lens portions vertical to the long-axis directions thereof, are disposed on a light-incident-side flat surface; and a plurality of light absorbing

portions interposed between adjacent unit lens portions of the plurality of unit lens portions to absorb external light incident from the light outgoing side, wherein the plurality of unit lens portions are arranged such that a part of the light incident on the unit lens portions from the light incident side is totally reflected on surfaces of the unit lens portions corresponding to side segments of the approximately trapezoidal sections vertical to the long-axis directions of the unit lens portions, and a section of each of the unit lens portions vertical to the long-axis direction thereof is formed in an isosceles trapezoidal shape, and the plurality of unit lens portions have at least two types of unit lens portions each having a different angle between each side segment and a light-incident-side long bottom segment of the isosceles trapezoidal section. Such a diffusion sheet is nowhere disclosed in Moshrefzadeh.

Although the Office Action asserts that Moshrefzadeh discloses the claimed invention, Applicants respectfully submit that the Office Action has misinterpreted and misapplied the disclosure of Moshrefzadeh. Moshrefzadeh in fact does not disclose all of the features of the claimed invention. In particular, Moshrefzadeh at least fails to disclose a plurality of *approximately isosceles trapezoidal* columnar unit lens portions, the plurality of unit lens portions have at least two types of unit lens portions each having a different angle between each side segment and a light-incident-side long bottom segment of the isosceles trapezoidal section, as claimed.

This limitation of claim 10 is shown, for example, in Fig. 4A, reproduced below:

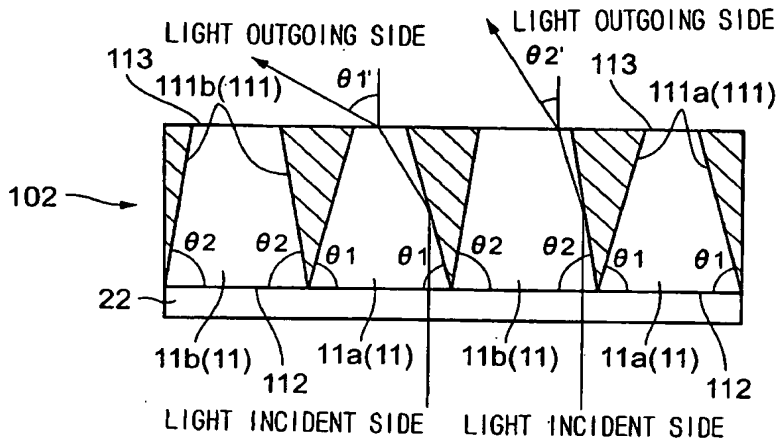

FIG. 4A

As shown in Fig. 4A, the diffusion sheet includes a plurality of approximately isosceles trapezoidal columnar unit lens portions 11, where the plurality of unit lens portions 11 have at least two types of unit lens portions 11a, 11b each having a different angle between each side segment and a light-incident-side long bottom segment of the isosceles trapezoidal section. That is, each of unit lens portions 11a and 11b are approximately isosceles trapezoidal, meaning that for each separate unit, the isosceles trapezoidal shape has two substantially equal length side segments and the angles between the side segments and the light-incident-side long bottom segment are the same. However, as between the unit lens portions 11a and 11b, the side segments are of different length, and the respective angles between the side segments and the light-incident-side long bottom segment are different.

The Office Action asserts that Moshrefzadeh has these same limitations in its disclosed diffusion sheet, citing to Moshrefzadeh at Fig. 10. However, Fig. 10 of Moshrefzadeh in fact does not disclose the claim limitations. Fig. 10 of Moshrefzadeh is reproduced below:

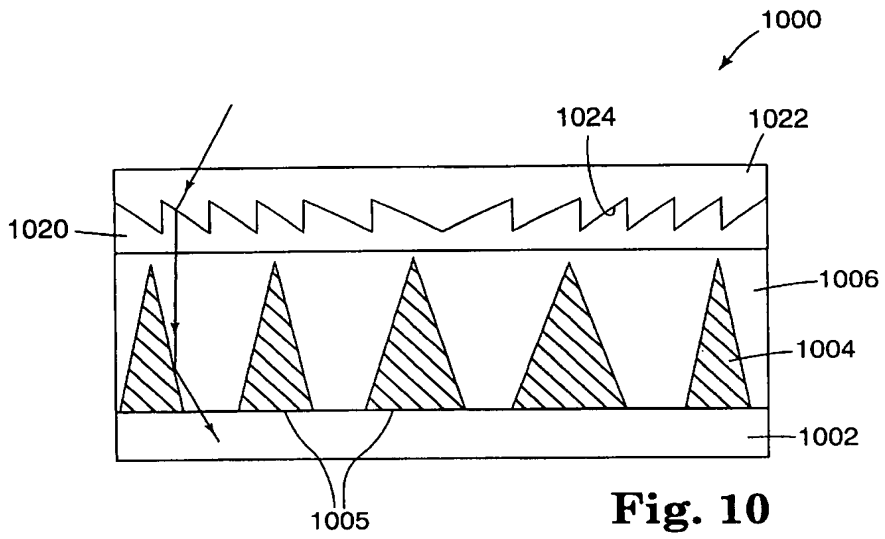

Fig. 10

As is clearly evident from Fig. 10 of Moshrefzadeh, Moshrefzadeh discloses a diffusion sheet that includes a plurality of columnar unit lens portions between light absorbing parts 1004. Further, from Fig. 10, it is apparent that the plurality of unit lens portions have at least two different types of unit lens portions. However, in Moshrefzadeh, the unit lens portions are not approximately isosceles trapezoidal, as claimed. Rather, in Moshrefzadeh, each of the adjoining light absorbing parts 1004 have different base segment lengths. As a result, for a given unit lens portion, the side segments are of different lengths, and thus the angles between the two side segments and the light-incident-side long bottom segment are different.

Accordingly, in Moshrefzadeh, none of the unit lens portions appear to be approximately isosceles trapezoidal, as claimed. Moreover, in Moshrefzadeh, there are not at least two types of unit lens portions that are isosceles trapezoidal sections, as claimed.

Moshrefzadeh does not disclose these features of the claimed invention, and thus does not anticipate independent claim 10, or the claims dependent therefrom. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

III. Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 14 and 15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Moshrefzadeh in view of Browning. Claims 16 and 18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Moshrefzadeh in view of Browning and further in view of Nakagawa. Because the rejections are related, they are addressed together. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejections.

The Office Action asserts that Moshrefzadeh teaches all of the limitations of the independent claim 10, but fails to teach the specific limitations of dependent claims 14-16 and 18. The Office Action argues that these features are taught by Browning and/or Nakagawa, and that it would have been obvious to combine Browning and/or Nakagawa with Moshrefzadeh to practice the claimed invention. Applicants disagree.

Regardless of the actual teachings of Browning and Nakagawa, any combination of Moshrefzadeh, Browning and Nakagawa still does not teach or suggest all of the features of independent claim 10, discussed in detail above. Nowhere does any of the references teach or suggest a diffusion sheet having a plurality of *approximately isosceles trapezoidal* columnar unit lens portions, the plurality of unit lens portions having at least two types of unit lens portions each having a different angle between each side segment and a light-incident-side long bottom segment of the isosceles trapezoidal section, as claimed. Neither Browning nor Nakagawa is cited as teaching these features of claim 10, and thus Browning and Nakagawa fail to overcome the deficiencies of Moshrefzadeh.

Still further, none of the references teach or suggest that the claimed structure would provide significant and unexpected results. In particular, by virtue of the approximately isosceles trapezoidal columnar unit lens portion design, it is possible to make a gain curve that shows brightness (gain) in a horizontal viewing direction, and that is both gentle and right/left symmetrical. See specification at page 9, line 22 to page 10, line 24. None of

Moshrefzadeh, Browning, and Nakagawa teach or suggest that any such improved results could be obtained by a diffusion sheet having the claimed structure.

For at least these reasons, the claims would not have been rendered obvious by the cited references, alone or in combination. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections are respectfully requested.

IV. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of the application are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,

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